



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.2413 | FAX (517) 373.5144
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/allen/

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 8, 2004

Contact: Jamie Callahan
1-866-525-5637

Mining expansion for Upper Peninsula receives unanimous vote

LANSING – The Senate today passed legislation that creates a state permit system for the mining of nonferrous metallic minerals that includes measures for enhanced local control. The measure will allow Kennecott Minerals Company, and other companies, to expand its operations by adhering to safeguards for the public and environment.

In the Senate, under the leadership of Sen. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City, amendments to the bill add local control measures to limit the hours of operation and to have input on truck transportation traffic patterns to reduce the operation's impact on area communities. Allen introduced identical legislation in the senate, Senate Bill 1457.

House Bill 6243, sponsored by Rep. Tom Casperson, establishes a permit process in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for the mining of nonferrous materials, or where iron is not the primary metal extracted.

"This legislation is a major achievement and will set the national standard for nonferrous mining," Allen said. "With local, environmental, and industry officials working together, we have crafted a policy which will create jobs in the Upper Peninsula, while protecting the environment."

The bill requires mining interests to submit to the DEQ a \$5,000 permit application fee; an environmental impact assessment; a mining reclamation and environmental protection plan to minimize adverse impacts on natural resources, the environment and public health; a contingency and response plan for possible failure of the mining operation and financial assurances.

"By working together with environmental, corporate, government and legislative interests we reached an arrangement that can benefit and protect all concerns," said Casperson, R-Escanaba. "Kennecott will be able to enhance its operations, the local economy will grow and impact to the environment and area communities will be minimized. And on top of all that, Michigan will go from having no standards for nonferrous mining to having one of the best programs around."

A permit holder also is required to conduct groundwater and surface water monitoring during mining operations and for 20 years following closure of the mine, and pay a fee based on the tonnage of material mined, not less than \$5,000 a year, to a newly created surveillance fund, for the state's monitoring, administration and enforcement of the permit system.

Additionally, Casperson's bill implements civil and criminal penalties for failure to comply with the protection act.

###

Editor's note: A photo of Sens. Jason Allen and Patty Birkholz and Rep. Tom Casperson is available for download on the Senate Majority Photowire at:

<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Allen/Allen.htm>